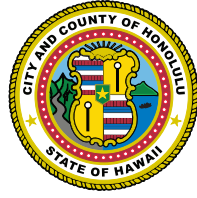


NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION OFFICE



Joan Manke, Executive Secretary

POWERS, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

The Neighborhood Board System was created in 1972, when Honolulu voters approved an amendment to the Revised City Charter, Article XIV. The amendment called for the establishment of a nine-member Neighborhood Commission to develop a Neighborhood Plan to assist in the formation and operation of elected neighborhood boards on Oahu. The purpose was to provide a mechanism to increase and assure resident participation in the process of government decision-making.



Neighborhood Commission Staff -

Front row: Executive Secretary Joan Manke, Executive Assistant Michelle Kidani, Bambi Wong, Russell Ho; Second row: Romeo Garcia, Mary Chanel-Benjamin, Nola Frank, Marie Richardson, Wendy Matsukado; Back row: Dean Harvest, John Lane, Elwin Spray, Bryan Mick, Rachel Glanstein, Leland Ribac.

FY 2008 HIGHLIGHTS

Neighborhood Commission Office Relocated – In November 2007, the Neighborhood Commission Office (NCO) was moved to Room 406, across the walkway from the former office. After two years of maintaining a second office in Kapolei, the Executive Secretary relocated the Kapolei staff to Honolulu to streamline operations, combine manpower and to improve efficiency and oversight. This move was completed in May 2008.

Neighborhood Plan – The Commission unanimously adopted the Rules and Procedures of the Neighborhood Commission and the Neighborhood Plan in June 2008, paving the way for the final approval by the Mayor and filing with the City Clerk.

Olelo Community Television – In January 2008, the Commission agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding to webcast Neighborhood Board meetings for a six-month period as a pilot project.

New Nanakuli-Maili Neighborhood Board –
seated: Chair Patty Teruya, Mervina
Cash-Kaeo, Neddie Waia mau-Nunuha
Cynthia Rezentes; standing: Black Hoohuli,
Kimo Kelii, Hanalei Aipoalani, Victor Kila,
Clyde Eli.



Initiative Petitions and Resolutions – Several resolutions were adopted to amend initiative petitions for several neighborhood boards, including the Ewa Neighborhood Board, which requested to change its subdistrict seats to all at-large seats; the Waipahu Neighborhood Board, which sought to realign its 11 subdistricts to three subdistricts; the Mililani/Waipio/Melemanu Neighborhood Board, which asked to decrease each of its four subdistricts by one seat and increase its at-large seats from four to eight seats; the McCully Neighborhood Board, which requested realignment of its subdistrict boundaries; and the name change of the Wahiawa Neighborhood Board to the Wahiawa-Whitmore Village Neighborhood Board.

Newly Formed Nanakuli-Maili Neighborhood Board No. 36 – In January 2008, the Commission adopted a resolution for an initiative petition to form a new Nanakuli-Maili Neighborhood Board on the Leeward coast.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION OFFICE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The NCO provides administrative and technical support services to the Neighborhood Commission as well as the 33 neighborhood boards. The NCO facilitates the City charter-mandated functions of the neighborhood board system, which are to increase and assure effective citizen participation in the decisions of government. These functions, duties and accomplishments are described in the following sections.

Neighborhood Assistants – The neighborhood assistants serve as the primary liaison between the boards, the Neighborhood Commission, and the City, State and Federal governments. They provide documentation of board activities by producing and filing meeting agendas; attending, recording and distributing meeting minutes; and completing the written and oral requests generated by official board action. Neighborhood assistants also provide technical information on proper meeting procedures, city policies and programs, and assist in producing and distributing materials to enhance two-way communication with neighborhood residents.

Administrative and Office Services – The administrative staff coordinates and services all regular and special meetings of the Neighborhood Commission. Substantial staff support and technical assistance were provided to the commission during regular commission meetings, complaint hearings, public hearings, committee meetings, permitted interaction (PI) group meetings, as well as activities dealing with issues affecting neighborhood boards and the neighborhood board system.

Staff coordinated and monitored the fiscal expenditures of each neighborhood board through its purchasing and accounting functions. Individual monthly statements were prepared for all 33 neighborhood boards to apprise each board of the status of its operational, publicity and refreshment appropriations. In addition to assisting with the preparation of the commission's annual operating budget, the administrative staff serviced the nine-member commission and handled all fiscal, personnel and property inventory matters.

Mayor's Representative Program - The administrative staff also supported the Mayor's Representative Program in cooperation with the Managing Director's Office. Representatives are cabinet members of Mayor Mufi Hannemann who attend board meetings to provide information as well as respond to community concerns expressed by board members and residents at each neighborhood board meeting. Questions and concerns that require research are then forwarded to the appropriate departments by the NCO staff. This process is monitored to assure that responses are received from departments in time for the Mayor's representatives to report and discuss at the following board meeting.

Staff Parliamentarian, Training and Educational Programs – In an effort to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of neighborhood boards, the NCO offered the services of a professional staff parliamentarian to assist and monitor board meetings, ensuring that meetings run smoothly and parliamentary procedures are followed. Mediation services were made available to a neighborhood board that experienced order and decorum issues over a period of time.

Public Awareness – In order to broaden public awareness of the neighborhood board system, as well as a part of its function as a city agency, administrative staff worked closely with 'Olelo community television in publicizing neighborhood board meeting dates on public cable television. 'Olelo is one of the more popular venues to view a neighborhood board

in action. Sixteen of the 33 boards have chosen to videotape their regular monthly meetings with funds provided in their annual budgets. While these boards air their meetings during regular weekly time slots on 'Olelo, other boards reach out to their communities via annual newsletters.

Web Site – An agreement for a six-month pilot project began in January 2008 to webcast neighborhood board meetings. Unfortunately, NCO was unable to secure funds to continue the webcast programs. The web site also includes individual board web sites with agendas and minutes going back through 2001, as well as boundary maps for each board and board photos. Agendas and minutes for the neighborhood commission are included along with commissioner and board member directories, calendars of monthly board meetings, office staff and mayor's representatives contact information and their board assignments. Almost 11,000 emails are generated each month in an effort to cut postage costs, in the distribution of boards and commission agenda and minutes.

Communication - Circulation of a monthly calendar of events, agenda and minutes continues to be valuable outreach mechanisms to routinely publicize activities of Oahu's neighborhood boards and the commission in a timely manner. In an average month throughout FY 2008, extensive communication-related services provided by staff allowed neighborhood boards and the neighborhood commission to reach thousands of residents and households, including government officials and organizations.

Additional services include the production and distribution of newsletters, surveys, flyers, posters, brochures, members' guidebook, and certificates recognizing citizens throughout Oahu. The NCO staff also published press releases and legal notices, and produced related correspondence as needed.

Complaints – In cooperation with the Department of the Corporation Counsel (COR), the NCO continued its review and resolution of complaints. In FY 2008, a total of 11 complaints were closed, three pre-hearings were held and five new complaints were filed. Efforts continue to work closely with COR and the commission to clean up the back log.

NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS

All 445 board members are volunteers and each of the 33 boards serve as advisory groups to the Honolulu City Council, Mayor Hannemann and the City administration, departments, agencies and other public officials of the State and Federal governments. Oahu's neighborhood boards function as an island-wide communication conduit, expanding and facilitating opportunities for community and government interaction. The Revised Neighborhood Plan, developed by the neighborhood commission, serves as the legal framework for the neighborhood boards.

Board Activities – Residents island-wide were able to view the following neighborhood board meetings on 'Olelo Community Television on a regular basis: Ewa Beach, Hawaii Kai, Kalihi Valley, Kailua, Makakilo, Manoa, Mililani, Mililani Mauka, Nanakuli-Maili, North Shore, Palolo, Pearl City, Waianae Coast, Waimanalo, Waikiki and Waipahu. Videotaping board meetings through arrangements with 'Olelo continues to be a popular venue to stimulate public interest.

Neighborhood boards provide their community with opportunities to express its needs and desires in the delivery of government services. Presentations from various organizations and associations on issues, concerns, and/or projects that will affect all of Oahu are often brought before the boards, including political forums. Some of the issues presented in 2008 included:

1. Kuliouou-Kalani Iki Neighborhood Board inviting Wayne Yoshioka, Director of the Department of Transportation Services, to attend a board meeting and receive input from Aina Haina residents related to bus stop relocations and bus routes;
2. Receiving presentations and making recommendations on zoning and variance applications and permits and land use proposals, discussing its impact on the community, including traffic impacts. Issues included the mass transit/rail project, EPA waivers for Honouliuli and Sand Island Wastewater Treatment Plants;
3. Raising concerns and making recommendations to the Mayor and the Department of Parks and Recreation related to park closures, beach access, including addressing homeless campers at various city parks; and
4. Several neighborhood boards reviewed their initiative petitions and submitted proposed amendments to the Commission for consideration.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

The Neighborhood Commission was officially established in 1973, after Honolulu voters approved a revision of the Revised City Charter, Article XIV. All nine members are appointed volunteers who serve in staggered five-year terms. Four of the Commission members are appointed by the Mayor, four are appointed by the City Council, and the ninth member is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. One of the Mayor's appointees and one of the City Council appointees as well as the ninth member of the Commission are required to have served one full term on a neighborhood board.

In addition to developing a Neighborhood Plan, which serves as the legal framework for the neighborhood boards, the commission is responsible for the review and evaluation of the Neighborhood Plan every five years. The City Charter mandates that upon request, the commission assist in the formation and operation of neighborhoods and neighborhood boards. The commission is required to meet a minimum of six times within a year to review and evaluate the activities, performance and operations of the neighborhood boards.

Commission Members - Members of the Neighborhood Commission during fiscal year 2008 were as follows:

Grant Tanimoto, Chair	
Sylvia Young, Vice-chair	Edward E. Gall
Sheila Apisa	Ron Mobley
Brendan Bailey	Jeanette Nekota
Clara Y. Ching	Kalene Sakamoto

Commission Activities - This fiscal year the Commission maintained an ambitious schedule and held nine regular meetings, six special meetings, and one training committee meeting, which were well attended by board members and community members. Commissioners conducted complaint hearings and held several public hearings for neighborhood boards who requested amendments to their initiative petitions, including the formation of a new neighborhood board.

Revised Neighborhood Plan – In July 2007, the Commission formed a Permitted interaction (PI) group to review comments and recommendations made by COR regarding the Revised Neighborhood Plan (RNP). The draft RNP was presented to the Commission in August 2007 and public hearings were held in November 2007. In June 2008, the Commission unanimously approved a Resolution to adopt the Rules and Procedures of the Neighborhood Commission and the Neighborhood Plan. The next step is the final sign off by the Mayor and filing with the City Clerk.

Other Permitted Interaction Groups for Minute-Taking Standards and Neighborhood Board Elections - Other PI groups formed included minute-taking and neighborhood board elections. Minute-taking procedures will be reviewed and recommendations will focus on establishing standard guidelines to improve the quality of minutes and to help neighborhood board assistants to meet deadlines. The elections PI group was tasked with reviewing options for conducting 2009 elections in light of budget cuts and a directive by Council during budget hearings that online voting be utilized in the upcoming elections.

State Legislature and City Council Activities - The Commission and NCO worked successfully for the adoption of Act 153 relating to legal requirements for neighborhood board meetings (changes to the Sunshine Law) and the deferral of a Council Resolution calling for term limits of neighborhood board members.